

# **Maryland's New Child Safety Seat Law**

## **Effective October 1, 2003**

### **What does the new law mean?**

The new law says that a child younger than six years (regardless of weight) or who weighs forty pounds or less (regardless of age) must ride in a correctly used child restraint system\* that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards when in a vehicle registered in the state of Maryland. A child riding in a vehicle registered outside Maryland must continue to meet Maryland's current law, which requires use of a child restraint system if a child is younger than four years or weighs forty pounds or less.

### **Is my child too big for a car seat?**

Children who outgrow a car seat at around 40 pounds need to ride in a booster seat because the vehicle seat belts will not fit them well.

### **Does my child need a booster seat?**

Take the five-step test on the back of this flyer or go to the website [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org). Or, you can attend a car seat inspection near you. There, a certified child passenger safety technician can help you secure your child properly.

### **How long should my child be in a booster seat?**

The law requires that children ride in booster seats up to age six. However, most children should ride in booster seats until about age 8, when they are big enough for lap and shoulder belts to fit properly.

\*Child restraint systems include infant seats, convertible seats, forward-facing seats, booster seats, or other safety devices federally approved for use by children in motor vehicles.

**In Montgomery County, call the Montgomery County Child Passenger Safety Program at 240-777-2467 or the Child Passenger Safety Hotline number at 240-777-2222.**

**For more information, or to get a list of upcoming seat checks in your area, call Maryland Kids in Safety Seats (KISS) at 800-370-SEAT.**